

Ellipsis

Volume 42

Article 13

2015

Dross

John RO Gery
University of New Orleans

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Recommended Citation

Gery, John RO (2015) "Dross," *Ellipsis*: Vol. 42 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/ellipsis/vol42/iss1/13>

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Dross

John Gery

the rest is dross

-- *Ezra Pound, Canto LXXXI*

I need the accoutrements
I don't need, so as not to be
just raw. I need for you to lie

to me to empower my own lies.
I need sleep, although
if I could do without it,

like a wizard who has no books,
I'd prefer that dervish's life
so long as I could save you

in it somewhere, like a ticket
kept from a memorable concert
I arrived for too late or dozed

through. I need the head rushes, my shirts
and pants, her jewelry. So do you.
I need the hundred things I'm afraid

to lose, so I might lose them,
not you. I need money. Oh, Lord,
how I need money – to bargain for

a power I then won't need
to exercise. What money
can you disburse? What laundry,

soiled between us, can go unwashed?
The world will long remember

what we say here today, I
promise, unless you manage,
as you may well do, to obscure it
with dross, with sultry details

your friends require to think of you
without having to think
of you. But oh, if I celebrate,

I celebrate you, not all these lovely
accoutrements surrounding us.
So pile on whatever buries me

and I promise to pretend, as once
you did in that bookshop,
I don't give a damn about you.